



State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Care Services



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

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TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS Letter No: 21-15
ALL COUNTY WELFARE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
ALL COUNTY MEDI-CAL PROGRAM SPECIALISTS/LIAISONS
ALL COUNTY HEALTH EXECUTIVES
ALL COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY MEDS LIAISONS

SUBJECT: POSTPARTUM CARE EXTENSION

The purpose of this All County Welfare Directors Letter (ACWDL) is to update Medi-Cal policy on pregnancy and postpartum care pursuant to H.R. 1319, the American Rescue Plan Act of the 117th Congress 2021-2022 (ARPA) (Pub. Law 117-2).

Under provisions of ARPA, California is opting to extend the postpartum care period for currently eligible and newly eligible pregnant individuals, and broaden the scope of coverage to full-scope benefits during both the pregnancy and postpartum periods, effective April 1, 2022. The postpartum coverage period for individuals receiving pregnancy-related and postpartum care services as of April 1, 2022, will expand to include an additional ten months of coverage following the current 60-day postpartum period for a total of 12 months, without requiring a mental health diagnosis.

Background

Under current California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22 Section 50260, a pregnant individual who was eligible for and received Medi-Cal during the last month of pregnancy, shall continue to be eligible for all pregnancy-related and postpartum services for a 60-day period beginning on the last day of pregnancy. Eligibility ends on the last day of the month in which the 60th day occurs.

Senate Bill (SB) 104 (Chapter 67, Statutes of 2019) amended Welfare and Institutions Code (W&I Code) Section 14005.18 to implement the Provisional Postpartum Care Extension (PPCE). PPCE is a state-funded program that extends the postpartum care period from 60 days to 12 months after the last day of pregnancy to an eligible individual who is receiving pregnancy-related services and is diagnosed with a mental health condition. Implementation of the state-funded PPCE program was effective August 1, 2020, as described in [ACWDL 20-14](#).

Medi-Cal Postpartum Care Extension under the Provisions of ARPA

Effective April 1, 2022, the Medi-Cal postpartum coverage period will be extended from 60 days to 12 months, and the current state-only PPCE program will sunset effective March 31, 2022. The 12 month postpartum coverage period for Medi-Cal eligible pregnant individuals will begin on the last day of the pregnancy and will end on the last day of the month in which the 365th day occurs.

Due to Continued Eligibility for Pregnancy (CEP) rules, pregnant individuals who are eligible under a Medi-Cal program will maintain coverage through their pregnancy and an extended postpartum coverage period regardless of income changes, citizenship or immigration status. These individuals shall maintain continuous eligibility in their full-scope pregnancy and postpartum coverage through the 12-month postpartum period.

Medi-Cal Access Program (MCAP)

Under current California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 10 Section 2699.209, a pregnant individual who was eligible for and received coverage under the Medi-Cal Access Program (MCAP) during the last month of pregnancy shall continue to be eligible for all pregnancy-related and postpartum services for a 60-day period beginning on the last day of pregnancy.

In the interest of aligning MCAP with the Medi-Cal postpartum care extension policies described above, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is pursuing a Health Services Initiative (HSI) to extend the provisions allowed in ARPA to MCAP as well. Under the HSI the postpartum coverage period for MCAP would also be extended for 12 months and end on the last day of the month in which the 365th day occurs following the last day of pregnancy.

DHCS will be issuing additional guidance in the coming months regarding the implementation of postpartum care extension under ARPA.

If you have questions regarding the postpartum care extension, please contact Cynthia Cannon by email at Pregnancy@DHCS.ca.gov.

Sandra Williams, Chief
Medi-Cal Eligibility Division